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## Foreign Correspondence, Items, etc.

Rome, May 14, 1859.

THE new Venus lately discovered in the excavations outside the Porta Portese, has been for some time a principal topic of conversation in the Cafés and in the Salons. For a few weeks there was a continual rush to see it. It would have been better had the lovers of Art and antiquity waited a little before they gratified their curiosity, for the statue is now placed in a good light, on a turning pedestal, and the head fastened upon the shoulders. It is shown in a small building near the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla. The goddess of love is as yet minus a nose and hands. She is almost a fac-simile of the celebrated Medicean Venus in Florence. The *torso* is quite fine; the most defective part is the knees, which have an attenuated appearance. The figure is a good deal incrustated as yet with the earth in which for so many centuries it has been imbedded. In the vineyard where this statue was found, the excavations still go on; and hopes are entertained of finding more treasures of Art beneath the soil. The spot is believed to be the site of the beautiful gardens of the Cæsars.

They are also excavating beneath the Baths of Caracalla, and have come upon some fine Mosaic pavements.

Beneath the church of St. Clementi the excavators have lately discovered a subterranean church, probably the oldest Christian structure in existence.

Some of the finest and best preserved specimens of ancient tombs yet discovered, are those on the Via Latina, a mile or two beyond the Porta San Giovanni. They were brought to light about a year ago. The sarcophagi, and the stucco-work, and some paintings on the walls and ceilings are extremely interesting. It is difficult to believe that these forms so unbroken, and colors so fresh, should have remained buried underground for so many hundred years. These tombs, which are entirely dark, are shown to visitors by bundles of wax lights, which the *custode* ties to the end of a long piece of Campagna cane. The loose earth around these tombs is full of broken bits of antique pottery, and pieces of porphyry, marble, cipolina, and serpentine; and it is said, that by patience, one may discover occasionally antique rings in the soil.

A most valuable and interesting collection of antique statuary is the Campana gallery. It contains a great number of works of a high order of excellence. Among them may be mentioned a Mercury, an Antinous, a fine portrait statue of Julius Cæsar, another of Demosthenes, and a long row of busts of the Roman Emperors. These works were collected at great expense by the Marquis Campana, together with a valuable collection of Etruscan antiquities, and the whole have been purchased by the government for 5,000,000 francs. They are still, however, in the market, I understand; and some of the Art-loving Americans who have seen them, have talked of an attempt to purchase them for the city of New York. They would be something new (for the very reason that they are so *old*, as well as good) for our cousins on the other side of the water. It certainly would be a good thing for Art in America to have such an excellent antique gallery among them, free to the public.

Among the English artists residing in Rome may be mentioned—in landscape and figures, Penry Williams, and Lear, who has very fine drawings of Eastern subjects; in landscape and animals, Colman and Poignandrestre; for portrait and history, Leighton; and for portrait drawings, Talfourd and Martin.

Among the sculptors—Gibson, Macdonald, Spence, Gatlley. Among the American sculptors—Story, Rogers, Mozier, Ives, Reinhart, and Miss Hosmer. Among the painters—Page, Brown, Whittredge, Williams, Cranch, Wild, Freeman, Chapman, Terry.

There are no good public exhibitions of modern pictures in Rome. That at the Porta del Popolo, and the exhibition by the Germans lately opened, are deficient in interest.

Very little encouragement has been held out to modern Art in Rome this winter; very few commissions have been given, or works purchased; and it is said to have been the most profitless winter among the artists of all nations residing here since 1850.

I am told that the Prince of Wales visited Mr. Leighton's studio, and was very desirous of purchasing one of his pictures—a head after an Italian model. Unfortunately the picture had already been sold to a French gentleman. I understand, however, that the artist has hopes of obtaining it for the prince. His Royal Highness, in addition to his order to Miss Hosmer, requested photographs of all her works.

Since the beginning of the charming spring weather, the lovely villas about Rome have offered a great attraction to visitors. The four most beautiful villas are the Albani, the Ludovisi, the Borghese and the Pamfili-Doria. The two former are open to the public (with permit) on one day of each week, and the other daily without a permit. The grounds of all of them are extensive and varied, portions being laid out in the Italian style, with walled gardens and much architectural decoration, and formal cypress avenues and hedges, while other parts are more in the English style. The Albani villa, where Winkelmann passed so many years of his life, and where may be seen some of the finest specimens of ancient sculpture, is said to be in the market for purchase. The present owner is the Milanese Count Castalbacco. The grounds of the Villa Borghese being in close proximity to the city, are more frequented than those of any other villa. Here, every day in the week, the citizen and *forestieri*, may be seen riding, walking, and amusing themselves. This spot abounds in beautiful shady avenues, fountains, groves of ilex and stone pines, and is varied by pleasant undulations of hill and valley. The superb umbrella-topped pines are only surpassed by those in the Pamfili-Doria. The glimpses of the dreamy Sabine mountains in the far distance enhance greatly the pleasure of a stroll through this lovely villa.

But Rome abounds so in picturesque views that it is difficult to pause long in one place in preference to others. For the landscape painter here is endless material. In this spring weather, we love to linger about the ruins of old Rome. One of the loveliest spots to dream away a warm afternoon in, or to ply the industrious pencil, is the Palace of the Cæsars, near the Coliseum. Here, the artist, the poet, the antiquary, the historian, and the mere loungeur, may all find something to delight them. These ruins recall Shelley's description of the Baths of Caracalla in his day. Huge arches of the old Roman brick-work, sinking away half buried in the earth and in the luxuriant vines and bushes—bits of isolated ivy-wreathed masonry, old and time-stained, rising out of vineyards and thick hedges of flowering laurestinus and elder, and showing great patches of sky through their rents, and sheltering the coy, fragrant wall-flowers that persist in blooming in the most inaccessible places—wherever you turn, half earth, half ruin—the old remnants of the pomp and splendor of forgotten days, overgrown with the fresh growth and bloom of nature—everywhere around you the

perfume of flowers and the song of birds, half beguiling you of your speculations about the Cæsars and the golden house of Nero. Then, looking away from the heights of these ruins, you see all around you still other ruins, all grouped in pictures ready made for the artist. And where there are not ruins, picturesque churches and towers and walls—and beyond all, the perpetual background of the Campagna and the purple mountains. And this spot is only one of so many where lavish nature

—“Decay prevents:  
Fills up Time's rugged rents,  
And tints the faded page  
Of the Augustan Age.”

There are many places about Ancient Rome where one loves to linger, while the blossoms of spring, crowning the crumbling Past, woo us into reverie. But we must refrain—or we should be drawn (unqualified) into a province more appropriate to the poet than to the mere letter-writer.

Dear Mr. Editor:

PARIS, June 15, 1859.

The above letter was prepared at the request of a friend, together with a previous one (as from an Englishman), for an English newspaper. The first letter was published, but not this—the second. The reason assigned for declining it was, that now, since the Prince of Wales (who is here mentioned) had withdrawn the sunshine of his royal visage from Rome, there was no longer any demand for a correspondent. The Eternal City had suddenly become dark, and any attempt to photograph it useless. Poor Rome! Like Niobe, et cetera (see “Childe Harold”), how she must have mourned the departure of the amiable boy who represents the future hope of England. I saw him frequently, the cherished minion of Albion. I don't mean to say I dined with him, or was even presented to him—being spared that bore—but in the streets and public places. In the Carnival he stood in a balcony on the Corso, with a little Spanish hat on, showering multitudinous and indiscriminate *confetti* right and left, with all the vigor of young England in his arms, and his face flushed with delight whenever he chanced to hit—no matter who—friend or foe. What cares England whom she hits? Her motto might be, “Hit him again—he's got no friends.” In the villa Pamfili-Doria, as I was sketching, he and his suite came right before me, extemporizing a group of figures in my foreground. But I refrained from putting him in my picture, for he had no crown on, nor royal robes, but only a straight black hat and coat like anybody else, and a cane to tap his leg with, as he gazed with a somewhat *ennuied* look at the Alban Mount in the distance. A pretty young prince, though, with a mild, Hanoverian cast of countenance, and very like his royal mamma. He did a pretty thing, too, in ordering a statuette of the Puck of our countrywoman, Miss Hosmer, and also photographs of her other works—a feather in Miss H.'s hat, which she seems to wear very unostentatiously.

I left Rome about a fortnight ago, direct for Paris. After Rome, Paris seems dreary, tame and unpicturesque. The houses and public buildings strike one as small and *meagrin*. With those grand old Roman palaces in one's head, French architecture is anything but satisfactory. Then, there is an utter absence of all that *contadine* costume, which tells so well against the neutral tinted old walls of Rome. The ouvrier class wear nothing but the eternal blouse and cap—and as for the bourgeoisie and upper classes, the hotter the sun the blacker and thicker the coats, and the straighter, shinier and blacker the

abominable hats, which seem nailed to their heads. The last few warm days have brought out some *chapeaux de paille*, but they are evidently not the *ton*, and are only allowed, not approved by the president of the society for the regulation of the fashions.

Paris has something, however, to show, in her Exposition of pictures, and of this I beg leave to speak in my next.

Yours truly,

ENT. PALETTE.

#### SKIMMINGS FROM THE FRENCH EXHIBITION.

PARIS, June 19, 1859.

Dear Mr. Editor:

I HAVE taken up my pen with a desire to send you some account of the exposition of pictures at the Palais d'Industrie. But I find it difficult where or how to begin—the reason of which will appear when you remember that there are 8045 pictures—a very large number of them works of a great deal of merit, a good many bad or indifferent, while there are, at least, one hundred of a superior order of excellence. In making this rough and loose division, I endeavor to judge the works exhibited by the highest standards. But in a collection so large, strict critical justice should require a great many more visits than I have been able to make. I have been only three times through this endless series of rooms, noting, each time, as carefully as I could, catalogue in hand, the works that particularly struck me.

I will not pretend to present you with the cream of the exhibition; but I will do what I can, and commence skimming—alphabetically, for convenience's sake.

ACHENBACH (Oswald) has a remarkably fine, quiet, grey-toned picture, “The Quay of Naples;” the foreground filled with well-composed and characteristic groups, lazzaroni, priests, soldiers, sailors, gentlemen and ladies—some shops and boats—while, in the distance, Vesuvius and the adjacent towns lie bathed in a warm sunset.—ANDRÉ. “View taken in the environs of Dex (Landes), an evening effect.—ANKER. “A Village School in the Black Forest.” A capital picture—excellent in color, well composed, and full of character. The old crabbed schoolmaster is the perfection of the comic.—AUBERT. “Réverie.” A single antequely costumed female figure, seated on a rock by the sea-side—very tender and sweet in sentiment.—BALLEROY. “The Departure; a huntsman leading a large pack of hounds—in the early morning.” The grass hung with the dewy cobwebs, is touched with much feeling for nature. The expression of the old hunter, and the character of the dogs, eager for the chase, are admirably rendered.—BAUDRY. A landscape in Brittany of a great deal of poetic power. A lonely road across a desolate sea-beach—with a stormy background.—BAUDRY. “A Repentant Magdalen.” Baudry excels in flesh coloring, in which his beautiful grey tones always arrest the eye in passing. He gained the first great prize in Rome for historical painting in 1850, and a first class medal at the Exposition in 1857. He has five other pictures; some of them portraits of remarkable vigor.—BAUME. “Inspiration—study of a head.”—BLIN. “After the Storm.” A fresh, vigorous landscape, representing a bare country road, with a few bushes and trees tossing in the wind—the ruts and gullies of the road filled with rain—the sky, half clear, half cloudy, has the wet, washed look which it should have. Blin excels in a masterly style of treating a piece of flat, monotonous landscape, making it recede wonderfully. His color inclines to grey, but always very good and harmonious.—BONHEUR (Auguste), a brother of Ma'lle

Rosa Bonheur. "Le passage du gué—souvenir du Mont Dore." His pictures, combining cattle with landscape, are often very clever. BREXDEL (Prussian). "Sheep," which seem to be his *spécialité*. He is thoroughly at home in his subject. They are literal, bona-fide sheep, huddled together and grouped very artistically, and with a fine, low-toned harmonious coloring. They are not poetic sheep. You can smell their very wool; they are so real.—BRETON has two pictures of great power and sentiment. One is "A Religious Procession;" the other, "The Recall of the Gleaners." Both are remarkable for wonderful truth of painting and expression. I was especially struck by the latter. A group of young peasant women with a sad and sorrowful expression on their handsome bronzed faces, are warned off the field where they have been gleanings, by the trumpet of the *garde champêtre*, for the evening is approaching. The quiet, low tone of the color is in harmony with the subject. As I remember the picture, it seems to me one of the gems of the Exhibition.—BROWNE (Madame Henriette). "Les Sœurs de Charité." A sister of charity holds on her lap a sick boy. Another sister stands near mixing a potion. The picture is simple and very effective. Nothing can be truer than the attitude and expression of the boy. There is as exquisite flesh-painting here as one could desire. This picture, as well as a portrait, are touched with a master's hand, and are among the best things of the exhibition.—CABANEL. A fine portrait.—CABAT. A landscape—sunset—one of the artist's best.—COEK, (Xavier de (Belgian), has several pictures, but they fall short of his works at the last exhibition. I remember one (a cattle piece) which I mistook for a Troyon. I have seen nothing of his here which should place him before many other cattle painters, whose works I have no time to mention.—COEUR. This painter has seven pictures—all alike—all precisely resembling his former works, and all equally bad. I should pass this artist by without mention, were it not that he is applauded by a clique of admirers, who place him almost foremost in landscape; and that in this department he has received a first-class medal twice, and a chevalier's decoration. How he got his reputation is a thing I never could comprehend. He has a certain harmony of tone, but that is all. He neither draws nor paints—he splashes and scrawls: his things seem only half-commenced: he has no variety of subject, and what he does looks dirty and slovenly, as if after he had done painting, he had rubbed the wet side of his canvas on the grass. His admirers admit that he does not paint ordinary nature. They claim for him the poetic element. I search in vain for any poetic sentiment, or for any special artistic skill. His color is remarkable for nothing so much as opacity and heaviness: his trees are flat and fuzzy, and woolly—ill-drawn and ill-touched; his skies icy-cold: he is fond of introducing nude figures; but I am sure they would be all goose-flesh in that chilly atmosphere. Do the French imagine Arcady or Fairy-land to be like this—no sun, no color, no warmth, no flower-perfume, no spring or midsummer, no tropic luxuriance, no divine dreamy distances; nothing that Arcady should have, everything it has not? A spectral, dim, unnatural twilight—suggestive of east wind, rheumatism, and flannels. Is this French poet-land? I hope not. It is more like painter's purgatory. Certain I am it is not *actual* French landscape. This year he essays figures of a larger size and of more pretension—"Dante and Virgil," "Macbeth and the Witches," and he fails only the more deplorably.—DE CUNZON has several very clever pictures. I noticed particularly "Women of Mola de Gaeta."—

DAUBIGNY, one of the best of the French paysagistes, does not seem to me to be up to the mark he made at the last exhibition. A large moonlight, grey misty picture, with a solitary shepherd surrounded by his flock, is perhaps his best picture. But it is too grey for moonlight.—DELAOROX exhibits eight pictures; but I remember only one which impressed me—"Ovid in exile among the Scythians"—a landscape with figures, of a large and poetic style. He must have other pictures worthy of notice, but they have escaped me, as many fine pictures must. For remember that these are but skinnings.

There are two good landscapes by DESAYES and DESGORET; a fine composition from Dante, by FEYEN-PERRIN; a large study of beech-trees, and a landscape, by FRANÇAIS; a number of good pictures by the two FRERES.—JEROME sends a large picture of "Julius Cæsar lying dead beneath Pompey's statue," and two other highly finished classical subjects.—HAMON sends but one of his delicate Pompeian figures—a "Cupid knocking at a Maiden's door."—HEILBUTH (German) has five charming historical pieces, rich in color and tone, of which "Luca Signorelli, the Florentine painter, contemplating his son killed in a quarrel, and borne by his comrades into a convent," and the "Poet Tasso at Ferrara," strike me as the best.—HEUVEL (Belgian) has a good school-scene.—HILDEBRANDT (Prussian) sends two very effective winter landscapes and 36 aquarelles.—HUBNER (German) sends an interesting subject, very well treated—"A young Sailor telling his adventures to his family on his return home."—KNAUS (German) has an admirable domestic scene—"an old married couple dancing on the occasion of their golden wedding surrounded by young wonderers and admirers." This is one of the best pictures of the kind in the exhibition.—One of the best landscapes is by KNYPPE (Belgian).—"Le marais de la Campine."—There is a superb piece of coast-rock painting by KUWASSER (from Trieste).—"a view of the coast of Normandy, near Fecamp." No. 1735, is a fresh sparkling landscape by LAMBINET.—RUDOLF LEHMANN, residing in Rome, sends his fine picture of the "Pontine Marshes;" a boat laden with corn and crowded with figures, some sitting, some sleeping, meets a herd of buffaloes swimming, and showing only their grim picturesque heads above the water. These buffaloes are sent in to clear the canal of the weeds and grass.

But I find that it will be impossible to adhere to any programme, and notice all the good pictures. Let me pause for a moment to speak of THEODORE ROUSSEAU, who stands as one of the first of the French landscape painters. I have noticed a falling off in his pictures since 1855. The best works I have seen from his hand were about that time. He has grown more *mannered*. He always sticks close to nature, but it is nature formalized. He has but one touch and one color for all his trees. They are not well drawn: his drawing of trunks and branches is shamefully slovenly: his distances do not reach sufficiently. What he excels in, is *tone*; whatever faults you may find, he always has harmony. He has studied the laws of color, both in nature and in the old masters. His range of subjects is small; his way of treating them monotonous; but in general what he undertakes to do, he does with entire freedom from convention, and with a genuine love of nature.

I pass over many excellent pictures, and come at last to a truly great master—TROYON. Troyon manages his landscape, which is generally only accessory to his animals, with perfect skill. His landscape is always in entire keeping with the rest. His fields, his trees, his skies, his foregrounds are all felt and understood by him, and painted with a vigor and skill, such as

few of the painters of this day seem to possess. You feel the presence of a master in Troyon: his cattle have wonderful expression and character. After looking at his, all the other cattle-pieces look lifeless, like lay-figures. Then what a masterly touch—what understanding of light and shade—what harmony of tones—what color! His pictures hang there unvarnished, quiet and grey, and subdued in tone; and you look at them, wondering what the mysterious power is, that makes them glow on the walls, and arrest your eyes and satisfy them, as a picture of Titian or of Rembrandt would. The secret is, that he too has studied the old masters in nature and nature in the old masters. Troyon is as preëminently a colorist in his branch of art as Couture or Delacroix or Diaz in theirs.

I must continue to pass by noteworthy names and pictures—such is the profusion of talent displayed always in these French exhibitions—and close my sketch with the mention of another colorist, totally differing in subject and style from the one last-named.—ZIEB devotes himself chiefly to Venetian and other port-scenes, where he finds scope for strong daylight effects and contrasts of color. He paints with a sweeping yet *savant* brush. He loves the intense blue of the Italian or eastern skies, against which he dashes palaces or minarets, ships, boats, gondolas, gorgeous groups of figures, roughly but skillfully touched in, and reflected in the blue waves, and piling on the paint where he needs his effect, without regard to microscopic eyes. He is a daring and generally successful colorist: he has two very effective scenes in the port of Constantinople.

I must not omit our representatives from America. I do not mean our members of Congress, who exhibit in Washington, but our painters who exhibit in Paris.—Mr. ROTHEMEL, of Philadelphia, sends three pictures; two of which—"The Giant's Staircase at Venice," where the death of the old doge is admirably painted, and "The Virtuoso," a venerable old gentleman absorbed in the study of books and engravings, stand well the test of comparison with the French. The same may be said of Mr. MAY's four pictures—"Francis I. weeping over the death of his son;" "Haidee and Zoé finding the body of Don Juan on the beach;" "an Italian peasant girl and her lover;" and a portrait. Mr. May is one of the best of our colorists, and has painted lately some of his best pictures.

As I stated at the commencement of my letter, I have been obliged to make many omissions of painters and their works. *Mais, que voulez vous*, when there are 3000 pictures to be looked at? So I have called my imperfect essays "Skimmings." Pardon the skimmer's short-comings, and believe me yours,

ENT. PALETTE.

GERMANY.—The present disturbances in Europe affect the Art world disadvantageously. The greater part of the public festivals are forbidden, or rather are suffered to go by uncelebrated. Whenever one does take place it is for the benefit of sufferers by the war. The artists of Vienna are about holding a permanent Art-exhibition, which is to last as long as the war lasts. Two-thirds of its income is to be devoted to the soldiers wounded in battle, and the remaining third is to be applied to the purchase of works of art for a lottery also for the same object. From all parts of the kingdom gifts and donations are continually pouring in to the artistic association, which, generally, are prompted by the purest patriotism. It is a noticeable fact, however, that a large amount of government securities, the value of which is very questionable, form a proportion of the contributions.

## THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, AUGUST, 1859.

### Sketchings.

#### RELATION BETWEEN GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

THE mind of man is so constituted and his tastes so diverse, that variety and dissimilarity are essential to his happiness; and, as each nation has stamped its conceptions upon the works of Art, the character of the race and the degree of its cultivation may be easily recognized. Superior to all other arts is that of painting, since it contributes most highly to intellectual delight, and tends to purify the soul and to fill it with noble aspirations. It is not pretended that Art, by itself, will Christianize the world, or that it will be substituted for religious principles; but it does contend against a mercenary spirit, and will ever render the name of that country immortal, which most assiduously fosters and cherishes its growth.

Perhaps landscape painting is more appreciated by the popular mind than portraits of the human character. The beauty conveyed by the pencil of a Correggio or Titian, the wonderful portrayal of *character* as observed in the works of Leonardo da Vinci, the angelic and spiritual forms of Raphael, are too often passed by unheeded; while the representations of Claude Lorraine entice and enchant the beholder. Although inanimate creation may have been a medium for conveying to the mind impressive and moral emotions, as is the case with Claude, yet now that imitation is so closely studied, the symbolical and spiritual element is too often altogether ignored. The landscape painter, therefore, may produce from a chaotic mass a symmetrical and harmonious combination; yet, if the symbolical be lost, his effort is merely mechanical. A lake may serve as the symbol of repose and quiet, and the snow-capped mountains of dignity and grandeur, while the roaring cataract may embody awe and solemnity. On the other hand, the picture may be a mere blending of color, having no reference to any trait of character or emotion in the soul.

The landscape painter is surrounded by the most delightful associations, and although he may be unaccompanied, still does he always have companions, who entertain and instruct. Noticing the configuration of the country, and examining each escarpment and plane; detecting the beauties of the rivulet as it winds like a silvery thread from the distant mountain, now leaping from crag to crag, and anon, lost in some woody copse, again re-appearing, and finally merging into the sluggish stream, which reproduces with beauteous accuracy each tiny leaf and lofty tree, he becomes a most diligent student, and an unwavering enthusiast in the works of nature. Each stone bears upon its surface characters so plainly legible that he "who runs may read." The particolorized lichens add grace and symmetry to the massive boulders, which have journeyed from the Polar seas, as they repose upon the breast of some crystal iceberg. These the artist sees and enjoys, and when the last touch is given to his sketch and the pencil is laid aside, his thoughts revert to those old times, when fauna and flora existed supreme, since breath had not yet given life to man.

It may be a subject of interest to know that Leonardo, who is placed at the head of the Florentine school of painting, was a geologist, whose views and theories coincide most remarkably